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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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No. 1

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THE DREAMER'S VISION.

A dreamer fell asleep one night,
And, lo! a vision full of light
And wonder came to him.
He seemed to stand upon the brow
Of some great mountain, and below,
Not distant, vague, and dim,
But touched with vivid light, the world
With all its treasures lay unfurled.

And swift-descended through the air
An angel stood beside him there,
Who, looking earnestly
Upon him, said, "My son, behold!
These precious things, this wealth of gold,
May all belong to thee.
Thou art a soul beloved of heaven
And to thy asking shall be given.

"Below thee is a path of life
With joy and love and beauty rife,
With not one single stone
To bruise thy feet, with not one thing
To sicken thee with promising,
And promising alone;
And, if thou wilt, thy life shall be
One constant long festivity."

The angel's voice—though broad and fair
The landscape lay before him there—

Had moved him with a thrill;
And, as a harp with untouched strings
Will answer back with murmurings
To kindred music, still
Within his breast, unsatisfied,
A deeper longing woke and cried:—

"Is this, then, all? Is this the worth
Of heaven to me, this good of earth?"

"One other thing there is,"
The angel said, "thy steps to lead,
One higher path for thee to tread.
But, ere thou seek for this,—
Since heaven itself can only give
Great things to those who greatly live,—

"Know that the way is rough and steep,
That torrents cross it, broad and deep,
That cliffs which almost meet
Above thy head will shut the fair,
Sweet face of daylight from the air;
But, if beneath thy feet
Subdued, these obstacles shall be
The very steps of heaven for thee!"

The dreamer woke; but still the voice
Seemed ever near him, and his choice
Was taken. Earnestly
He turned to life. In all its storms
He thought to see the shrouded forms
Of angels drawing nigh,
And learned how great and deep a thing
It is to grow through suffering.

—*The Liberal Christian.*

THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE RELIGION OF JESUS.

II.

As in springtime the rain comes down
from the clouds and permeates the soil of
earth, causing new life and beauty to come
forth in park and garden, on meadow and
hillside, so the insight and conviction of the
Teacher of Galilee penetrated human hearts
as an influence from heaven, filling the soul
with a new vital energy, inspiring the mind
with a fresh courage and hope, awakening
mankind to a filial consciousness of the pres-
ence and power and love of God. And the
explanation of this marvellous result is found

in the simple fact that Jesus himself lived the kind of life he talked about. It was no mere theory with him, a belief of the intellect, a philosophy of life; it was his personal and constant experience. Thus his life—his religion—became a revelation (an unveiling) of spiritual facts and laws for the rest of mankind. He was so fully convinced that God was his Father, that the divine spirit dwelt within him and was manifested to others through his personality, and that every one else was, like himself, God's dear child and might become the inlet and outlet of all heavenly influences, that he inspired the world with the same sublime confidence. Not because he was by nature different from other men; but, being a man himself, he was certain that whatever was true in his experience might become true in the thought and life of all God's human children if they would obey the divine voice in the conscience, yield to the influence of the divine spirit in the heart, and endeavor to live as becomes children of the divine Father. He was so inspired by his conviction of the divine presence and help and care that all who heard his words or felt his influence were lifted into the same ideal life as he lived, becoming conscious that they, too, were of divine origin and immortal destiny. Thus this heavenly conviction began to spread throughout the empire with a strange and powerful contagion. Amid tyranny, oppression, suffering, and almost universal despair it made life worth living. In an age destitute of ideal purpose it created a sense of spiritual things, brought divinity into contact with human affairs, and dignified the soul with the consciousness that it belonged to God and heaven.

This is the distinctive feature of the religion of Jesus which has made Christianity a working force in the world, drawing to the Christ leaders of thought and rulers among men, as well as the ignorant and poor and despised. And this faith in God as our Father, this hope for man as his child, this conviction of the essential kinship of the soul to God, is as much needed in the twentieth century as it was in the first. Indeed, this is the only principle of life which can overcome the evils of to-day, keep human experience fresh and sweet and progressive, and save modern thought from the chilling and blinding materialism which sees nothing divine in nature or the soul, or from the hopeless and blighting conclusions of such scientific writers as exclude the idea of divine

Providence in a world governed by natural force and law, or from that new kind of fatalism expressed in Matthew Arnold's noted phrase, "A power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness."

This distinctive feature of the religion of Jesus, this essential and vital principle in his teaching and life, is not something that the world will ever outgrow, or forget and leave behind in the onward march of modern civilization. For it is as necessary to the continual development and progress of the soul as the light and heat of the sun are necessary for material prosperity. It is the conviction that we belong to God, are made in his image, partake of his nature, and may hold personal communion with him as children with a parent. It is the sense of a divine presence in nature and in life; the consciousness that God knows us by name, loves us with an everlasting love, holds us in his arms amid all danger, and guides us by his right hand in all the journey from earth to heaven; that he forgives all our faults and failings, and helps us to forgive the errors and wrong-doings of others; that he fills us with spiritual life and love, peace and harmony, and makes us the channels through which these divine qualities flow forth to bless and help all to whom our influence reaches. This is "the good news of the grace of God."

Our Father, we thank thee for all the great and good of every nation and land who have lived so near to thee that the light of their faith and good works have become our guide, assuring us of the truth of our religious convictions, and inciting us to give ourselves to thy service, and to follow on in the pursuit of truth, righteousness, and love. But most of all we thank thee now for the light and truth which shine from the life and teaching of Jesus, revealing so much of thy goodness and love that he has become the way of heaven, the life of our dearest hopes and highest aspirations, the light that leads the world to thee. May his spirit of truth and service fill our hearts, making them so pure that we shall see thee as he saw thee, love thee as he loved thee, and serve thee as he served thee. So shall our light shine out bright and clear, causing thy kingdom of peace and love to come wherever we go, filling the little world of our daily influence with the glory and beauty of the heavenly life. Amen.—*Alexander T. Bowser.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Oh, ever on our earthly path
 Some gleam of glory lies;
 And heaven is all around us now
 If we but lift our eyes.
 Lift up the heart, lift up the mind!
 Until the grace be given
 That while we travail here on earth
 Our hearts may be in heaven.

Anonymous.

Let us set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth; for, you see, a life spent in brushing clothes and washing crockery and sweeping floors,—a life which the proud of earth would have treated as the dust under their feet; a life spent at the clerk's desk; a life spent in the narrow shop; a life spent in the laborer's hut,—may yet, be a life so ennobled by God's loving mercy that for the sake of it a king might gladly yield his crown.—*Canon Farrar.*

There is only one way to get ready for immortality, and that is to love this life and live it as bravely and cheerfully and faithfully as we can.—*Henry Van Dyke.*

Test your beliefs by this law of the Fatherhood of God. Are they, followed out to their logical conclusion, honoring to him as a father? If not, throw them aside: find no rest till you hold others that are. Be sure that the Eternal Love and Eternal Justice is worthy of the best you can bring.—*William D. Little.*

Religion as an experience comes to us, not like so many others of earth's helpers, to offer us its aid only in hours of sunshine, and when all goes well. Rather does it proffer its help most urgently and generously when other resources fail. There is no time of deepest, sorest need in life, when it is not at hand for us if we will have it.—*J. T. Sunderland.*

PRAYER.

Everlasting and almighty God, whose power alone giveth to each the victory in life, quicken us to be faithful, obedient, and eager soldiers. Open the eyes that are blind to thy light, unstop the ears that are deaf to thy voice, touch and soften the hearts that are insensible to thy love. Give us, we beseech thee, some word of healing and comfort to speak in thy name, some work of mercy to do for thee. Be with us to strengthen and direct us in our own lives; and may we labor on with a good courage

and a sustaining hope, with faith to commit ourselves to thy care, and for time and for eternity to trust ourselves to the divine love and compassion which thou hast revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen.—*The Christian Register.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received that book." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.—Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the offer to the club. To send the book involves packing it twice and paying postage twice, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" Unless otherwise stated, all books offered in this department are given, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "Black Beauty" address Miss Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Milton branch of the *Cheerful Letter*. Address Miss Edith S. Tilden, White Street, Milton, Massachusetts.

Educational.

"Second Reader," Cyr; "Fourth Reader"; "Second Reader," Hillard; "Fourth Reader," Sheldon; "First Reader," "Second Reader," Harper's; "English Grammar," Quackenbos;

"Elements of Geometry"; "Elements of Physics"; "Third Reader," Cyr; "History of Rome," Creighton; "Geographical Reader"; "History of Rome," "History of Greece," Dr. Smith; "History of Rome," Sewell; "English Political History"; "General History," Tytler; "Rhetoric," Hill; Latin Grammar (3); Caesar; "Latin composition"; Ovid; "Plane and Spherical Trigonometry" (3), Wheeler; "Elements of Logarithms" (2); "Geometry" (2); "Arithmetic," Colburn; "Arithmetic," Chase; "Algebraic Problems"; School Geography (2).

Poetry.

"Hanging of the Crane"; Holmes's "Poems"; "Lays of Ancient Rome," Maccauley; "Hymns"; "Psalms and Hymns"; "Translation of Homer's Odyssey," Book I., Bryant.

Music.

"Musical Vade Mecum," Saroni; "Elements of Music," Streeter; "A B C of Music," Panseron; "Boston Collection of Church Music"; "Spinning Wheel"; "The First Sorrow"; "He was a Prince" (song); "Valse"; "Far Away."

Miscellaneous.

"Roman Imperialism," Seeley; "Essays," Emerson; "Self-formation; or, History of an Individual Mind"; "Essays," Arthur Helps; "Transvaal from Within," Fitzpatrick; Brassey's "Life and Labors"; "Little Lucy's Wonderful Globe"; "Midsummer Night's Dream"; "Poor Richard's Almanack"; "Jesus of Nazareth," Clodd; "Lectures to Young Women," Eliot; "Heavenly Blessedness"; "Memoir of Samuel J. May"; "Ecce Deus"; "The Missionary Enterprise"; "To Whom Much is Given," Mead; "High-caste Hindu Women"; "Memoirs of Anna Jameson"; "Early Italian Painters," Mrs. Jameson; "Universal Progress," Herbert Spencer; "Life and Epistles of St. Paul," Vols. I. and II.; "Development Theory," Bergen; "Judas Maccabæus," Conder; "Discourses on Various Subjects," Orville Dewey; "Sisters Abroad; or, An Italian Journey"; "Views in Asia Minor"; "Training of Cavalry Horses," Garrard; "Manly Exercises," Walker.

REQUESTS.

[Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write

very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club Secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. Through the columns of your paper I wish to thank a kind friend for sending it, as the one who sends it is unknown to me. I enjoy it very much, but have not had any reading matter sent me for a long time. I would be glad to receive some pictures for my little girl as she likes them so well. My health is so poor I seldom go anywhere. Mrs. W. G. Church, Brier Creek, Wilkes County, North Carolina.

2. I have received a package of mail from your society, also a card informing me that my name had been accepted by your committee. We live on an isolated farm with few neighbors, and have always taken lots of papers and magazines; but for the last two years long-continued sickness in the family has brought a debt on us, and we are unable to take any now. As we are all very fond of reading, we have missed it sorely. I will give you ages of my children, and you can form an idea of their wants, though they wish "American Boy" and *Youth's Companion* above all,—three boys, fifteen, nine, and seven; three girls, thirteen, eleven, and four years. My husband and myself are devoted readers of all good literature. Mrs. Lillie Venable, Warren, Bradley County, Arkansas.

3. I want to thank all the dear friends that have remembered me in the past. I thank the one who sends me *The Cheerful Letter*. I enjoy reading it very much. I have two precious little boys, Edgar and Percy, aged four years and one year. I shall be thankful for any good reading, and will gladly pass it on to my friends. Any picture-book or cards will be appreciated for my little boys, or anything that will amuse them. They will share with other poor children whatever is sent them. My office is changed from Dobyn, Virginia, to Critz, Virginia,

R. F. D. With best wishes for the dear *Cheerful Letter*, Mrs. Albert Owen, Critz, Virginia, Patrick County, R. F. D.

4. (Miss) A. A. Peatross, Jute, North Carolina, desires to state to the *Cheerful Letter* friends, who have written or sent literature during this year, her reasons for not answering were that small pox at the post-office quarantined the literature. It has just been delivered, and most of the labels were burned. Her appreciation and sincere thanks are extended.

5. I want to thank you for the reading sent me through the *Cheerful Letter* friends. I will appreciate anything you will send me. Mrs. Sarah E. Wigginton, Stuart, Virginia.

6. Mrs. Jessie Rossmiller, Luce, Minnesota, wishes to thank all who so kindly sent reading matter during her recent and almost fatal illness. She is still unable to write.

7. Miss Laura Myers, Doylestown, Ohio, will be glad of any reading.

8. Mrs. Millie Grant, Goodwell, Oklahoma, asks for reading for herself, husband, and two boys,—Vonnice, aged ten, and Wayne, aged five.

The address of Miss Nora P. Wingfield, formerly of Roseland, in now Esmont, Virginia.

THE MOTHER'S COUNCIL.

MARY'S DRAWING CLASS, AGAIN.

They came to say that it was so warm now that they might go out on a drawing excursion if Mary would only go with them.

Mary said that she would like to go very much, and after some farther conversation it was decided to form a party for the next morning.

In considering the subject, they came upon what Mary was at first disposed to consider a very serious difficulty, arising from the number of girls that were intending to go. On counting them up, it appeared that there were ten or twelve that wished to be of the party.

"I don't see how I can take care of so many," said Mary. "Besides we shall make such a crowd of girls going along the street that everybody will stop to look round at us."

"We must scatter along," said Tirzah, "three or four together."

"Yes," said Mary, "that will be a very good plan."

The enterprise seemed to be very well planned in all its details, but I am sorry to say that it did not succeed very well. Indeed, it was in almost all respects a decided failure, and Mary was quite distressed at the result of it.

The first difficulty that the party met with was in going through the town on the way to the mill. Mary did not like to have so large a party go along together like a flock of sheep, as she said, for everybody to stare at; and so she adopted Tirzah's suggestion of "scattering along." She appointed Tirzah herself—she being a very considerate and careful girl—to go first, taking one other child with her. She charged Tirzah to be very careful not to walk fast, but to go along slowly enough to make it easy for the others to keep up; and she was to look back occasionally, to see whether the next pair were coming on, and were at the proper distance, and, if not, she was to walk more slowly, or even to stop, if necessary, to allow those behind her to come up.

Next to these two were to come three girls,—three that wished to walk together. They were directed to wait till Tirzah and her companion had gone on a little way, and were then to follow, but to keep at a considerable distance,—about as far, Mary said, as they could throw a small stone. If they found that they were getting too near to those before them, they were to walk more slowly; and, if they were getting too far away, then they were to go faster, so as always to keep about as far off as they could throw a small stone.

The rest of the party were divided in the same way, into sets of two or three, and sent off at intervals after each other, every different set being instructed to keep always as nearly as possible at the same distance from those before them.

These instructions, if they had been properly followed by the children, would have had the effect of enabling the whole party to pass through the village without attracting any attention; for they would not have appeared to be one party at all.

But the children, being full of excitement and joy, did not pay much attention to the instructions after they once began their walk, and, indeed, they got quite into a frolic in regard to them; for Lucinda, who happened to be one of the three that came next after Tirzah, finding, just as they were

passing through the busiest part of the village, that she and her set were too near to Tirzah, said suddenly:—

"Look, we are getting too near! Mary said we must not get so near that we could hit them with a stone."

So saying, she picked up a small pebble, and threw it forward toward Tirzah. The other girls with her did the same. The girls of the set behind them, seeing this, thought that they would try the same plan. So they began to pick up pebbles and throw them at Lucinda and her set.

Those behind them, seeing what was going on, concluded to join in the frolic. And so, before long, every set was busy picking up pebble-stones and pelting those before them.

And this was not the worst of it. For when Tirzah and her companion who were at the head heard the pebbles rattling on the ground behind them, and on looking round saw that Lucinda and the others were throwing stones at them, they began at first to walk faster and then to run, in order to get out of the way. It is true the pebbles were very small and would not have hurt them much if they had hit them; but they did not like to be hit by stones in the street if they were ever so small, and so they hurried on to get out of the way. Lucinda then, and those with her, began to run, too, partly to keep up with Tirzah and partly to get out of the way of those who were pelting them from behind. Then those behind them began to run in the same way; and Mary, who came last, had very soon the inexpressible mortification and chagrin of seeing her charges running as fast as they could run after each other along the most public street of the village, screaming with laughter and pelting each other with stones.

What made it all the more vexatious for Mary was that there was nothing that she could possibly do to remedy this disorder except to run after the children and try to stop them. But to do this would have been only to complete the ridiculousness of the exhibition which her party were making of themselves.

To have attempted to call to them would have been worse still; for they were so far before her that she could not have made them hear without actually screaming, and this would have added to the disorder and called the attention of the people in the street to it still more effectually.

So Mary did the best thing she could possibly do in the case, and that was noth-

ing. She walked quietly along, just as if she did not belong to the party at all. Only she took care to notice particularly how many children there were who did not take any part in the disorder, and to remember their names.

At length the children became tired of the fun, and probably, too, they began to feel some sense of the impropriety of it, and they resumed their regular order of march, and after this went on very quietly.

They went on in this way until they came to a gate, which led to the path through the fields which would take them to the mill.

Mary went up to the children, who were assembled at the gate, without any expression of displeasure upon her countenance, but smiling as usual.

"Well, girls," said she, "we have got so far. Now, open the gate, and let us all pass through. We can go along this path through the fields and woods all together, or just as we please and we can run about and play as much as we like."

The children, who had all felt some misgivings when Mary was coming to join them, expecting that she would scold them for what they had done, were greatly relieved at being accosted in this way, and felt more joyous and hilarious than ever. They set off all together on the full run along the path, their shawls and bonnet-ribbons fluttering behind them, so that they were now more like a flock of birds than a flock of sheep. This was, however, of no consequence; for they were now in a retired place, where there could be no harm in any amount of fun and frolicking.

But unfortunately any intellectual enjoyment like that of drawing and the pleasure of fun and frolicking, though each excellent by itself, do not go well together. When at length the party arrived at the place below the mill where they were going to draw, they had become so flurried with the excitement and the motion that they found, when they had got out their drawing materials and had seated themselves on the rocks and begun to draw, that their hands trembled so much that they could not do anything at all.

Besides they were all now so full of fun that they felt much more like running about and playing and throwing stones into the water than like sober, patient work with their pencils. Some left their paper on the rocks, with a stone upon it to keep it from blowing away, and went to look over the

work which the others were doing. Some went down to the brink of the stream and began to throw stones and sticks into the water. One boy climbed up into a little tree, and called out to the rest to see how high he was; and two girls began clambering up some jagged rocks, to see if they could not get up higher still than the boy.

You may wonder, perhaps, where Mary was all this time, and why she did not exert her authority to restore order. The truth was that Mary had come to the wisest conclusion that she could possibly have adopted under the circumstances, which was to give up the whole plan of making this a drawing party, and let it go for a frolic.

"They have got into such a gay condition," she said to herself, "that it would be very hard work to bring them to order. Indeed I don't see how I could do it at all. Besides they need to have frolics now and then as much as they need to learn to draw; and, as this is one of the last pleasant days we shall have this year, I will let them have a good time."

So she went and took her seat upon a flat stone under some trees growing near the bank, where the warm sun shone very pleasantly, and let the children do as they pleased.

A few of the girls went on patiently and faithfully with their work, in making a drawing of the bridge. Some others, after beginning and drawing a few strokes in a hurried and consequently a careless manner, became dissatisfied with their work and gave it up. These and some others left their drawings unfinished, and went away to play, placing their books upon the stones which had served them for seats, to keep their places until they came back, and many of them left their drawings upon the books. Before they had been gone long a little puff of wind came and blew all these loose drawings away, whereupon there suddenly arose a great running after the flying sheets, and scrambling to get possession of them, accompanied by shouts and outcries and peals of laughter.

As soon as this excitement had subsided, Mary went around to all the girls who were patiently and faithfully attending to their work, and gave them such suggestions and advice as she thought would help them, and then told them privately, one by one, that they had better not try to do much more.

"You can't draw very well now," said she, "while all the rest are playing and making such a noise. So stop as soon as you come

to a stopping-place, and put your drawing in your book and your book in a safe place, and then go and play with the rest. I have got a plan for you to finish your drawing. But it is a secret. I will tell you about it by and by."

After this she went among the other girls and said:—

"Who will give me a piece of paper? I want to make a list."

Several of the girls offered her paper. She took a piece from one of them, and, placing her paper upon her book, prepared to write her list.

The children all gathered around her, asking what the list was that she was going to make.

"A list of all the girls," said she, "that did not run after each other and throw pebbles at each other as we came along through the street.

"I didn't," "I didn't," the girls all began to say. Those who threw the stones the most called out "I didn't" as loud and as earnestly as any of the rest. Those who really did not throw any stones were silent.

"You need not tell me who did and who didn't," said Mary. "I saw at the time, and took pains to remember till I could write down the names, and I am going to write them now."

"What for?" asked one of the children.

"Not for anything very particular," said Mary. "Only it might be convenient some time for me to know the names of some of the girls that I can depend on to obey my rules."

"You can depend upon me," said one of the girls.

"And me," "and me," said the others. Those, however, who had proved by their actions that they could really be depended upon did not say a word.

Mary began at once to write the names. There were five in all. It happened that these five were the very same that had gone on working industriously at their drawings until Mary advised them to stop.

"Put my name down," said one of the other girls, after Mary had written the five.

"And mine," "and mine," said several others.

"But you did not obey the rule," said Mary. "You were to have walked along quietly; but instead of that you began racing after each other, and shouting and laughing and pelting each other with stones. That was not obeying the rule."

"Well, we will next time."

"Yes," said the girls, "we certainly will. So put our names down."

"Well," said Mary, "I think you will, and so I will put your names down; but not in this list. I think you will obey the rules we agree to, next time; but I *know* that these five will, for they did to-day. I will keep this list by itself, because I *know* about these; and I will put the other names on another list, for those that I *think* will obey the rules another time."

The children, of course, all looked rather sober at the idea of having such a distinction made; but they could not make any reasonable objection to it, nor could they entertain any unkind feelings toward Mary for making it. She did not seem angry or out of humor with them, and of course they had no inducement to feel angry or out of humor with her.

"Understand," said she, "I don't find any fault with you for getting into a play when we were coming along. It was only play. You only meant it for fun."

"Yes," said the children, "that was all."

"And the pebbles that you threw were very little," continued Mary,—"too little to hurt anybody if they had hit them."

"Yes," said some of the children, "no bigger than that,"—measuring off at the same time a very small part of the end of their little finger.

"That is all," said Mary. "They would not hurt anybody if they did hit them."

"One of them did hit me," said one of the girls.

"And I am sure it did not hurt you," said Mary.

"No," replied the girl.

"It was a very harmless kind of play," said Mary. "The only thing is that it was the wrong time and place for such a play. When we are going in order on a grand expedition is the wrong time to get into a frolic, and the street of the town is the wrong place. But you did not think of that."

The children said that they did *not* think of that, but they would all be careful to remember it the next time.

"I have no doubt you will," said Mary.

Indeed, the girls were all very sincere in this determination. And I think myself that Mary's mode of managing the case was infinitely better than any kind of scolding.

[After they had had their picnic] Mary then formed the whole company into small

parties of two or three, as they were inclined to join each other, and sent them off at different times and by different ways, until all had gone. They all knew the way home well enough, and she thought it safer for them to go home in this way than to attempt to march them through the street again.

Indeed, she could not trust them to go through the street; but she did not tell them so.

After they had all gone, Mary remained on the spot a little while by herself alone, sitting on the rocks and watching the water. At length she set out on her return home and had a very charming walk by a retired and romantic way. She enjoyed her walk very much; for her mind was calm, tranquil, and happy, owing, in a great measure, to her not having scolded the children.

When, some days after this, she gave an account of the affair to her uncle Edward, she said:—

"The party was too large. I never mean to undertake such a large party again."

"Oh, no," replied Mr. Edward, "don't make that resolution. Make just the contrary one. It is a good general rule not to leave any work that you undertake in the midst of a difficulty. So I advise you not to be stopped in having expeditions with children by not being able to march them in a quiet and orderly manner through the town. Try again, with new precautions. If you were rather unskilful in managing such things, I should advise you to try a smaller number next time, and gradually increase the number as you find you can manage them. But I think you could manage a larger number next time. So I advise you to take the first opportunity to form a larger company than you had before, and see if you can't arrange so as to take them through the town in good order. I think you will do it, and by doing it you will have the satisfaction of thinking that you conquered the difficulty, instead of letting the difficulty conquer you."—*Jacob Abbott.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

HOW BIRDS PROTECT THEMSELVES.

Great was the astonishment of a lady, sewing beside an open window one morning last May, to have a Baltimore oriole fly from a half-built nest in the elm tree on the lawn to the window, alight on the sill, timidly advance toward the work-basket on the

window-seat, and, while she sat motionless, breathless, to see the bird tug at the end of some darning-cotton and then dart through the window with the cutting trailing from her bill.

It did not take the delighted hostess long to prepare more tempting invitations for her guest to return. Breaking off short lengths of worsteds, some bright-colored, some brownish-gray natural wool, she spread them about on the casement. Presently the bird flew by the house again, caught sight of the worsteds, wheeled suddenly about, alighted on the shutter, hopped to the worsteds, selected a gray strand and flew off. Again the oriole returned, again she chose the natural wool. On the sixth trip her feminine taste was apparently sorely tempted by a bit of pink yarn, for she touched it twice with her bill before deliberately carrying away the last grayish piece. Every bright-colored strand was rejected. This set the lady thinking.

Of all our common birds the oriole is perhaps the most æsthetic. That she is far in advance of most of her kind is shown by her marvellous skill as a weaver, and further proved by the attractions in a mate that are necessary to woo her,—the most gorgeous of orange and black feathers, and, as if they were not enough, the most persistent songs throughout the courtship. Certainly a bird with so keen an appreciation of form, color, and music must have some excellent reason for being so quietly clad herself and for choosing sombre-colored materials for her nest. The obvious reason explains also the motives of very many other birds respecting their plumage and homes.

THE FIRST LAW OF NATURE.

Various birds have adopted various methods of protecting themselves and their young, about whom they are even more concerned, every species having some special method of its own. By far the greater number, however, depend chiefly on the protective coloring of their plumage, and the more closely that harmonizes with their surroundings the more likely are they to escape the ever-watchful eyes of their foes. Naturally it is the female which requires the greater protection; for in the great majority of cases it is she who builds the nest, covers the eggs, and cares for the young, often with little or no help from her mate. His chief business in life is to woo and win her; therefore on him nature lavishes her choicest gifts of

plumage and song even if she sometimes skimps on his beauty of character. The oriole, more than any other of our brightly colored birds, has learned to confide in man, living on terms of neighborly intimacy with him; and, finding himself comparatively safe, he has lost the fears that once must have beset all conspicuous birds. Yet there is need for the mother oriole to reflect in her feathers the olive green, soft grayish-brown and yellow of the leaves, twigs, and sunlight she lives among.

The mate of the brilliant scarlet tanager likewise mimics with her clothes the sunny green light of the tree-tops.

Except for the merest suspicion of blue in her plumage, who would ever suspect the indigo bunting's dingy brown little mate of belonging to him. She, like her sparrow cousins of the dusty roadsides and dry fields, looks of the earth, earthly, while he, to win her, boldly dares reflect a deeper blue than heaven among the glistening verdigris tints of his coat.

Nor are any telltale feathers worn by the wives of our most brilliant warblers, the Blackburnian and the redbird, which must instantly arrest the duller eye when they flash, glowing bits of flame and salmon, among the deep shadows of their favorite evergreens.

WHEN BIRDS LOOK LIKE THEIR MOTHERS.

The robin merely wears a deeper red on his breast than his mate. Such accenting of color at the nesting season in males that are otherwise similar to the females is common when neither bird has much to fear from brilliancy of hue. Male woodpeckers always wear more or less red on their heads, literally setting their caps for a bride. The English sparrow attempts nothing more showy than a black cravat.

Young birds of either sex and of many species usually look like their mothers when there is anything to be lost by following their father's shining example. In the latter case young males come into their heritage of beautiful feathers by degrees for a better reason than fear lest their heads should be turned before maturity. Thus it takes the purple finch two years to perfect his color.

Necessarily every bird has the means to conceal or defend himself or to escape from his natural foes; but when, after ages of natural selection, especially beautiful feathers developed on many, neither shotguns nor milliners had entered into the bird's calcu-

lations. How could the snowy white heron have foreseen that the exquisite plumes (aigrettes) that he wears on his back as a wedding decoration would some day be transferred to the unthinking heads of vain women in such enormous numbers as to cause the extermination of his species? And, on the face of it, would it not seem ridiculous for any woman to wish to wear a stuffed owl or a parrot on her hat? Yet the Carolina parakeet, which was once common even so far north as New Jersey, has been practically annihilated for no more worthy end. The wonder is that, in spite of a slaughter of the innocents repeated year after year, there should now be any bright birds left.—*From the Ladies' Home Journal.*

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

There had been a growing intensity in the religious life of Lord Ashley. The habits of meditation and prayer had increased, the spirit of ardor, confidence, and love had shone forth more conspicuously in public and in private, and his studies had been more constant in religious literature, with a view "to attain deeper acquaintance with critical theology."

His marriage was a source of great happiness. From his diary we give the following extract:—

"June 11.—Yesterday was the anniversary of our wedding. Mark it with the red letters of joy, hope, and gratitude. If men would all base their love upon esteem, and their esteem upon religion, and their religion upon affectionate Christianity, marriage would prove a twenty-fold source of earthly happiness and surety for heaven."

Even at this period of his life there was well developed in him that peculiar capacity which distinguished his more public career,—the ability to attend to an amazing number of subjects at the same time, and to allow to each its proper place and proportion. Already he had become identified with many and various philanthropic efforts in addition to those connected with the interests of the laboring classes. His influence had largely penetrated into religious circles, and he was now to take the lead in the important ecclesiastical movement about to be described, with which his name has ever since been closely associated.

At this time he became greatly interested in an association formed for the sake of increasing the number of working clergymen

in the Church of England, and providing the assistance of lay workers where these might be of use.

The first years of the "Pastoral Aid Society" were years of trial, difficulty, and ceaseless controversy, and entailed upon Lord Ashley, who took the lead on all occasions, an enormous amount of labor. His good judgment and counsel, his tact in smoothing down differences, his experience of the requirements of poor and neglected parishes, his patient attention to the details of every fresh move in the organization of the society, and the influence of his tongue and pen were invaluable at this time. Nor did his efforts cease with the initial difficulties of the enterprise. On the contrary, he continued to take the deepest interest in its progress and prosperity. For nearly fifty years he was hardly ever absent from the chair on the occasion of the annual meeting, and always reserved for that meeting the full expression of his opinion on the state of the Church and the signs of the times. His speeches on behalf of the Pastoral Aid Society give the religious history of nearly half a century.

Lord Ashley was appalled to find, from reliable authority, the state of spiritual destitution prevalent in many parts of the country. The path he had taken in public life led him to an intimate knowledge of the destitute condition of some of the manufacturing districts with respect to religious instruction; but he was surprised to learn from official documents that 100,000 souls were, in spite of every effort, national and voluntary, annually added to those who, in Protestant England and under the wing of an Established Church, had neither pastors, sacraments, nor public worship, but were left unheeded, with no man to care for their souls. It was the sense of this pressing and ever-increasing need that urged him to strain every nerve to make the Pastoral Aid Society the efficient institution it has become; and from first to last he claimed for it, in spite of all argument to the contrary, full recognition as a Church of England Society, regarding the wants of the Church on the one hand and observing the order of the Church on the other.

Meanwhile, the Government Factory Act of 1833 was meeting with the strongest condemnation from the supporters of the Ten Hours Movement. Its details had been artfully arranged to make different clauses come into operation at different dates, so as

to delay the complete working of the act till 1836. When Lord Ashley threw the bill into the hands of the ministry, he retired for a time from the contest. Incomplete as the bill was, it was better than nothing; and he had said, "God prosper it."

But he, and other friends of factory legislation, soon saw that the act was in many respects absurd in its details, and foredoomed to be ineffectual. Practical men declared that it was never meant to be obeyed, and that those who framed it only wished to disgust the people with all factory legislation. As regarded the younger children, the act was undoubtedly beneficial, inasmuch as it shortened their hours; but in nearly all other respects it seemed to produce vexation, disappointment, and confusion.

On June 22, 1838, Lord Ashley, at the request of the factory operatives, moved, as an amendment on the order of the day, the second reading of a "Factories' Regulation Bill" that had been introduced and several times deferred. Into this bill it was his intention to have inserted a ten hours clause on reaching the committee stage. Lord Ashley charged the government with having "deluded and mocked" him with false promises, with having taken the matter out of his hands by their solemn pledges, and with having failed to keep their promises.

"The public attention," said the *Times*, "cannot be too forcibly directed to the scandalous conduct of the Melbourne government with regard to the factory question as exposed by Lord Ashley on Friday evening in his most impressive and striking speech. It was not merely that the noble lord, to whom parents and children and the cause of humanity are all alike and so deeply indebted,—it is not, we say, that he has himself been 'mocked and deluded' in the prosecution of his benevolent schemes by the broken faith and callous feelings of this mercenary and jobbing clique, but that laws of their own making have been left unenforced and the unfortunate children unprotected, and that 'all the representations and remonstrances made to the ministers upon the subject had been treated with total neglect and contempt?'"

On June 28 the *Times* again devoted a long leading article to the subject, especially denouncing Lord John Russell for asserting that Lord Ashley "is under a delusion which he has created for himself if he supposes that a great many children are suffering under

the infliction of grievances." It proceeded to show that Lord John himself was under "one of the most monstrous delusions that mortal man ever created for himself," seeing that half the children working with surgeons' certificates at thirteen were evidently not twelve or even eleven; that thousands of pounds had been paid by the children for these fraudulent certificates; that convictions only resulted in half-crown fines; that inspectors took two years to go their rounds, and gave notice of each visit; that some masters gave no meal-times in the nine hours, and it was doubtful whether the Act of 1833 required any; that in Derbyshire and Cheshire (as proved by the Inspector's Report) "a system of tampering with the factory clock prevails" in order to rob the children and others of their time. These were but samples of existing grievances, and in most cases there were no means of redress except by appealing to judges who were themselves the oppressors.

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her brother, James Freeman Clarke.

BOSTON, Jan. 5, 1834.

I heard Mr. Emerson deliver a lecture the other evening before the Society of Natural History. It was beautiful. The idea of it was that man is exactly adapted to the place in which he is put. His house was made for him by his kind Father; the land drained off for him and made of such a consistency that he can till it; its ventilators and chimneys (the volcanoes) put in order; its atmosphere prepared from the most healthful combination and proportion of ingredients, everywhere the same; its temperature so regulated that he can bear it anywhere,—quite endurable in the hottest places, perfectly tolerable in the coldest; his food of all kinds put within his reach. He cannot swim through the water like a fish; but in his boat he can do as well, and much more than a fish. He cannot fly, like a bird, through the air; but he can send his arrow, and bring any of its inhabitants down to his feet. His fuel, too, is provided. The beds of coal, that were first buried far under the surface of the earth, are thrown up, so that his little hands can dig it out. Not only is the atmosphere suited to him, but the weather varies, to suit every mood of his mind. After this, and much more, he went to the physical system, the eye assisting the hand by its natural adjust-

ment to it. Said he: "I can remember when I first discovered this secret, and most of the gentlemen present must remember it, too. When I was a boy and tried to throw stones, I could never hit the mark until, one day, I accidentally looked at the mark instead of at my hand, and to my surprise I hit it. After that I always looked at the mark. I will not pause to dwell on the fine moral to be drawn from this fact." (The moral was more evident than if he had said more about it.)

The general idea seemed to be that a man in the possession of his natural faculties, and those all in full activity, could do what he pleased upon the earth. I hope I have given you some idea of it. There was one fine part where he said that, if he was astonished by the wonderful instances of the goodness of God, he was more delighted at the choral harmony of the whole.

Miss (Elizabeth) Peabody invited me to a party (to meet Mr. Emerson, Miss Hoar, etc.). Mr. Waldo Emerson did not come, but his brother told me that he (Waldo) had received a note from you, and that he meant to write to you and send your German translations. That he went to see Mr. Carlyle; found him living delightfully retired with a lovely wife, reading German with her all the time; liked him better than he expected. Even Mr. C. was quite a different person from the "New Light" man. He was disappointed in Coleridge. Thought him a fine, raving madman. Charles Emerson, speaking of his brother's lecture, said that he felt quite ridiculous in doing it, he knew so little of natural history. I could see no deficiency: perhaps it was the better for that. He *understood* all that he knew. I write all this because I know you care about Mr. Emerson a good deal.

Well, James, we had some tableaux Thursday evening, and Mrs. D. wanted to see them. We made them in a hurry that afternoon and had them in the evening. H. and S. R. did the sisters of Scio to admiration. H. does it with more spirit than any pretty girl I have ever seen. J. D. took your place, and George P., Mr. R's. Susan B. was here, too, and made Mr. — admire her more than ever. Mrs. B. is here, and is in agonies to have them at her house. So Monday we are to have them there. She says we can have Mrs. H., and Mary B. we hope to have. I mean to try Pandora and Penelope this time. If it succeeds, I will tell you about it. H. R. is with Mrs. D. constantly.

James, you must come home next summer; for Miss Martineau is to be here. She is coming with Dr. Tuckerman and Mr. Phillips, I believe, and is to travel about the United States, if it is proper to do so with a servant. Have you seen the little portrait of her? It is more like Mrs. Farrar than any one, though not half so handsome. She has published a book of devotional exercises and a guide to the study of the Scriptures, in which last I was disappointed, as it is a mere hint. I wish *you* would tell me how to read the Bible, for I am one of those who sigh for a less disjointed method. Little Thomas likes to read it with me, but he cares only for the visions of the prophets and for the wonderful stories.

Last evening we had the tableaux at Mrs. B's. I wanted to make *her* do Penelope at the loom, and, though she seemed to incline to it, a sense of propriety deterred her. H. R. was diverted to the last degree by this struggle between her love of the picturesque and the proper. Ellen S. did Joan of Arc in Prison very finely. Mrs. H. would not do anything. H. R. is a fine "Enchanted Princess." We had the advantage of an abundance of scarlet shawls. Sarah R. did Pandora with her box. But I am rather tired of these things. There is more form than spirit in them.

I had a letter from William the other day, detailing his visit to you. He seemed in fine spirits. Abraham does not deign to write. Dr. Hoffmann has not arrived. Your journal I read every day, almost. I wish to hear the rest of the history of B. Do not suppose it can be uninteresting to me. I am at Aunt McLellan's where I have been since yesterday. H. R. came to see me to-day, and brought me some translations that you gave George. That about "Conquers in no Easy War" I admire, and have admired; but I never knew before that you translated it. Are you the author of the lines about the "Vain Developing Period"? and those about the "First Love?" Will you send me those you wrote about — which you once showed me? I did not feel the full significance of them at the time, being self-absorbed. You know what I mean.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

The new editor of the "Amusement Column" exchanges kind greetings with her readers, and invites them to send answers

to the puzzles, friendly criticisms, and any puzzles, old or new, which have interested them and have not appeared in the *Cheerful Letter*. She also invites answers to the following question, Do you prefer to have the column devoted entirely to puzzles, or would you like simple games that can be played at home, entertainments for birthdays, Easter parties, etc., and particularly games by which invalids can amuse themselves during lonely hours? Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Miss Kate L. Watson, P.O. Box 57, Worcester, Massachusetts.

I.

A PUZZLING GAME.

My mother amused all her children with this puzzle from the time when we were old enough to reckon. If she had told us the secret, she would have dispelled the charm, and I never found out how she did it until I was fully grown up.

She would say, "Think of a number."

Sometimes we chose different numbers, each keeping our own counsel, and sometimes we all chose the same, whispering it to each other. In either case the whole mental process was silent.

Suppose we chose twenty. Mother would say, "Double it."

This being done, perhaps she would say, "Add eight to it."

"Forty-eight," would be our silent answer.

"Divide it by two."

"Twenty-four."

"Take away the first number you thought of, and the remainder will be four."

It will be seen that the remainder would have been just the same, whether the number thought of had been one or a million.

We tried it again and again. She gave us a different number to add every time, and invariably told us correctly what the remainder was. Suppose we took six. Perhaps she would say, "Think of a number. "Double it." "Add five to it." "Divide it by two." "Take away the first number you thought of, and the remainder will be two-and-a-half."

I asked her once what the number that I thought of was, and was surprised that she did not know. How did she do it?

II.

We take the following from "A Century of Charades," taking the liberty of altering

one line, as the race mentioned, though not calling itself Christian, is *not*

"Devoid of every human grace," as stated in the original.

Charade.

Unfold this riddle, if you can,
A bird and beast once made a man.
That man begat a numerous race,
Endowed with every human grace;
It makes me shudder in my shoes,
His children in their blood he brews.

III.

Easy Emiga

When my 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, is not 6, 7, 8, 9
to count large gains, he is my whole.

IV.

Enigma.

I am composed of twenty-four letters.

My 14, 15, 19, 20, is to incline.

My 17, 7, 22, 9, is a vessel.

My 1, 19, 5, is a domestic animal.

My 11, 2, 4, 12, is shape.

My 3, 16, is a personal pronoun.

My 13, 21, 19, is a girl's name.

My 24, 8, 18, is to strike.

My 23, 10, 8, 14, is to make dirty.

My 5, 10, 3, 4, is a journey.

My whole is the name of a celebrated poem.—*St. Nicholas.*

V.

Cross-word Enigma.

My first is in Frank, but not in Joe;

My second is in deer, but not in doe;

My third is in infant, but not in child;

My fourth is in gentle, but not in mild;

My fifth is in cat, but not in dog;

My sixth is in hole, but not in bog;

My whole is a country in Europe.

—*St. Nicholas.*

Conundrum.

Which side of a pitcher is the handle on?

MONTHLY REPORT.

The regular monthly meeting was held at 25 Beacon Street on Friday, May 6, at 10.30 o'clock. Miss Clarke was in the chair. In the absence of Miss Langmaid, Miss Howe acted as secretary. Twenty-nine were present. The secretary's and treasurer's reports were read.

Miss Brown reported that she had assigned sixteen libraries during the month: twelve were by new branches. We have now 128 libraries in 22 different States, owned by 59 branches. Chestnut Hill and King's Chapel each have nine. Six places are still waiting for libraries.

Mrs. Nichols stated that the work of the Book Club had been more satisfactory this winter than ever before, because the reports had been sent in more regularly.

Fifteen secretaries reported in person, and several letters were received. Many have sent from 2,000 to 3,000 periodicals in the last six months. Jamaica Plain has increased its list of names for its Lending Library: several of those who have benefited by it have offered to contribute books.

The Framingham secretary has interested a child to whom she sends books to establish a loan library of her own, and she would be glad to have others send books to the same child. She feels strongly that those who receive our reading should feel the same spirit of helpfulness, and in return spread good literature among their friends. The meeting adjourned at 11.50.

LOUISE HOWE,
Secretary pro tem.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

We clip the following passage from a daily paper. Some one ought to give the other side.

ONLY THE DOG HAS MADE ALLIANCE WITH US.
[From "*Our Friend the Dog*," by Maurice Maeterlinck.]

Man loves the dog, but how much more ought he to love it if he considered, in the inflexible harmony of the laws of nature, the sole exception, which is that love of a being that succeeds in piercing, in order to draw closer to us, the partitions, everywhere else impermeable, that separate the species! We are alone, absolutely alone, on this chance planet; and, amid all the forms of life that surround us, not one, excepting the dog, has made an alliance with us. A few creatures fear us, most are unaware of us, and not one loves us. In the world of plants we have dumb and motionless slaves, but they serve us in spite of themselves. They simply endure our laws and our yoke. They are impotent prisoners, victims incapable of escaping, but silently rebellious; and, so soon as we lose sight of

them, they hasten to betray us and return to their former wild and mischievous liberty. The rose and the corn, had they wings, would fly at our approach like the birds.

Among the animals we number a few servants who have submitted only through indifference; cowardice, or stupidity,—the uncertain and craven horse, who responds only to pain and is attached to nothing; the passive and dejected ass, who stays with us only because he knows not what to do nor where to go, but who, nevertheless, under the cudgel and the pack-saddle, retains the idea that lurks behind his ears; the cow and the ox, happy so long as they are eating, and docile because, for centuries, they have not had a thought of their own; the affrighted sheep, who knows no other master than terror; the hen, who is faithful to the poultry yard because she finds more maize and wheat there than in the neighboring forest. I do not speak of the cat, to whom we are nothing more than a too large and uneatable prey, the ferocious cat, whose sidelong contempt tolerates us only as encumbering parasites in our own homes. She at least curses us in her mysterious heart; but all the others live beside us, as they might live beside a rock or a tree. They do not love us, do not know us, scarcely notice us. They are unaware of our life, our death, our departure, our return, our sadness, our joy, our smile. They do not even hear the sound of our voice, as soon as it no longer threatens them; and, when they look at us, it is with the distrustful bewilderment of the horse, in whose eye still hovers the infatuation of the elk or gazelle that sees us for the first time, or with the dull stupor of the ruminants, who look upon us as a momentary and useless accident of the pasture.

Dear pussy! Is it thus that the great philosopher speaks of you? All those who have had a cat for a friend will rise up against him. He has known only cats who have been ill-treated. Win pussy's confidence if you want to know how charming he can be.

You are sitting writing at a table. You feel an almost imperceptible touch, light as a roseleaf, on your arm; you scarcely know whether you hear a timid, almost inaudible mew. You look down. Two round wistful eyes are looking up at you. Pussy is standing on his hind-legs, one paw laid on your arm, one resting on the table. Now speak encouragingly to him. Say, "What does my

pussy want?" With a spring he is on your lap, rubbing his soft cheek on yours, with loud grateful purrs. Nothing can be more touching than his gratitude; nothing prettier than his happiness when he finds he is not repulsed.

My pussy sits by me at the table, watching for some little dainty mouthful. One day he forgot himself, and clawed my hand to hasten my movements. I gave his paw a little tap,—not a hard one, just a little hint. After that, he three times laid a *soft* paw on my hand, but not a claw. And not only that day, but many days after, he would touch me softly, but never give the least scratch.

Pussy comes sometimes to lie on a broad lounge in my room upstairs. If I am already sitting or lying on it, he never fails to come purring up, and rub his cheek against my face or hand. He never settles down to his nap without this courteous greeting.

If I take him in my arms, he does not fidget or stiffen. He presses his face against mine and purrs. If I do him some little service,—let him in, from out of doors, by opening a window,—it seems as if he never would leave off thanking me. Sometimes he nestles his little nose *into* my face: sometimes he lays a paw softly on my lips. But, although treated as gently as a cat can be, he waits and watches for a welcome. He does not take it for granted. And how grateful he is for it!

Pussy's feelings are easily hurt. He is greatly interested in examining everything new and strange. One day, to his extreme delight, the parlor furniture, which had been all covered up, was disinterred, the covers taken off from everything. Pussy is very fond of leaping and springing on any high place: tables, bookcases, mantels are favorite promenades. Lest he should amuse himself by walking on the parlor mantel and knocking the vases, etc., onto the floor, some one gently took him up in her arms, carried him out, and shut the door. This impoliteness was more than he could bear. He ran up to my room, two flights,—mewed loudly and sharply at the door, and, when it was opened, sprang on my bed, settled himself there and would not go down for an hour, although it was his breakfast time, and although exceedingly fond of the person who had shut him out.

Dear pussy! With his exquisitely graceful movements, his shy delicacy, his pretty caresses, his timid, imploring gestures, his sensitive loving heart, his tender, easily

wounded feelings, his joyful, pathetic gratitude! Love him, treat him very gently, respect his moods, regard his feelings, study his disposition, and he will repay you a thousand-fold.

L. F. C.

Mrs. W. B. Nichols, the Book Club secretary, asks that givers of books will remember to write to her before responding to a request for a particular book. If you see a request for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," for instance, do not send off your copy of "Uncle Tom." Six persons may do the same, and five copies are wasted. Write a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying, "*Shall I send my copy?*"

It is wiser, also, not to send in answer to an interesting letter printed in the *Cheerful Letter*, without first writing to Mrs. Nichols. Mrs. A. C. Earl, Leahy, Washington, writes us that she has received reading enough to last her *five years*. Her mail is brought to her from the post-office, a long distance, and the immense amount received has been an inconvenience.

SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Self-abnegation,—that rare virtue that good men preach and good women practise. *Holmes.*

It is seldom that God sends such calamities upon men as men bring upon themselves and suffer willingly.—*Bishop Taylor.*

Why fret thee, soul,
For things beyond thy small control?
Do but thy part, and thou shalt see
Heaven will have charge of these and thee.
Sow thou the seed, and wait in peace
The Lord's increase.

—*Kate Putnam Osgood.*

"If all Christians were like Dr. Agnew," say the resolutions, "all men would become Christians. With him religion was not a cloak, but a career. It was not a formula, but a faith. It was not alone a liturgy or a creed, but the practice, during every working hour, of the commandment, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'"

The greatest evils are from within us, and from ourselves, also, we must look for our greatest good; for God is the fountain of it, but reaches it to us by our own hands.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, Box 91, South Framingham, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Learn that the thing to fear is not death, but life.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Miss Frances B. Fisher, our Assistant Secretary, is to be absent in Europe for several months. Will members and others kindly notice this, and send requests for correspondents to Miss M. A. Macomber, Framingham, Mass., until further notice?

We are sorry to hear of the death of Mrs. Jennie L. Satterfield, Mt. Airy, North Carolina. Her daughter has removed, and lives with her aunt, Mrs. Laura S. Satterfield.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY,—Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. Charles T. Catlin, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks should be made payable to Mary Louise Catlin.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Mrs. Catlin at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.